



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release September 17, 1982

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1982-83 WATERFOWL HUNTING SEASON FRAMEWORKS SET

Waterfowl hunting season frameworks established for 1982-83 in the Federal Register by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are generally the same as last year.

NATIONWIDE

-Stabilizing duck season lengths and limits. Essentially the same duck season lengths and limits that were in effect the past 2 years will be in effect this fall. This is part of a 5-year cooperative study undertaken with Canada to determine how hunting regulations, duck harvests, and duck populations interrelate. By stabilizing major duck hunting regulations, waterfowl managers will be better able to evaluate the effects of factors such as habitat conditions, production, disease, and natural mortality upon harvests and the populations of ducks. An environmental assessment that describes the proposal was issued by the Service in August 1980.

Atlantic Flyway

-Canada goose season in the Carolinas. The Canada goose season framework for North Carolina and South Carolina is shortened to 43 days and the opening delayed to December 20, 1982. This will confine hunting to the time when northern geese are most likely to be present.

Mississippi Flyway

-Mississippi Valley Population of Canada geese. To help reverse the downward trend of these geese, a number of hunting restrictions are established. These include reducing the season length to 30 days in portions of Wisconsin, and to 40 days throughout the remaining range of these geese; reducing the harvest quotas to 18,000 (from 20,000 in 1981) in Wisconsin and 27,000 (from 30,000 in 1981) in Illinois; altering the allocation of the Illinois Canada goose quota to better allow for harvests occurring outside the four-county quota zone; reducing the bag limit outside the quota zone in Illinois; and increasing the area in western Kentucky where a 40-day goose season will apply. The area of the 40-day season in Kentucky is reduced somewhat from that described in the proposed frameworks. Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee are offered the option of establishing Canada goose hunting seasons in areas previously closed.

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-Waterfowl season frameworks. An extension of the goose season framework to February 15 is provided in the Southeastern Canada Goose Management Area of Michigan to help alleviate nuisance goose problems. Wisconsin is allowed an October 1 framework opening date for the waterfowl season.

-Zoning. Michigan may modify its duck zone boundary to alleviate a local enforcement problem. Illinois may establish a zone in three central counties to allow a small harvest of local giant Canada geese.

-Definition of "geese." For regulatory purposes, brant are defined as "geese." This will allow hunters to harvest brant which occasionally appear in the Mississippi Flyway. This definition also applies to the Central Flyway.

Central Flyway

-New Mexico goose framework. The goose framework for New Mexico now provides for separate seasons on "light" and "dark" geese, as is allowed in other portions of the flyway.

-Zoning for duck hunting. New duck hunting zones are established for Montana, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, and a modification is made in the Nebraska zones.

Pacific Flyway

-Goose framework changes. Minor changes are made in the goose season frameworks in Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Utah so that goose hunting seasons may coincide with duck hunting seasons. Portions of Coos, Curry, and Tillamook Counties of Oregon are closed to all Canada goose hunting to protect Aleutian Canada geese which have been found to winter there.

-Whistling swan frameworks. Minor changes provide more flexibility to State conservation agencies in issuing permits and tags, and in monitoring the harvest of whistling swans.

The Services final frameworks for migratory waterfowl hunting were published in the September 17, 1982, Federal Register. State conservation agencies select their regulations from those offered in the final Federal frameworks. Final late season regulations will be published in the Federal Register in late September.

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